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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/820,429	03/28/2001	John M. Mela	21113-05687	5043

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EXAMINER

THEIN, MARIA TERESA T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3625

DATE MAILED: 07/18/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/820,429

Applicant(s)

MELA, JOHN M.

Examiner

Marissa Thein

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 March 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on March 28, 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) Attached
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Applicant's "Amendment" filed on March 14, 2003 has been considered with the following effect.

Examiner includes the Interview Summary that was conducted on February 27, 2003.

Examiner acknowledges that the specification and claims 4 and 20 were amended.

Claims 1-25 remain pending and an action on the merits of these claims follows.

Drawings

The drawings filed on March 28, 2001 are acceptable.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-25 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,844,554 to Geller et al. Regarding claims 1-8, Geller discloses a method and system for performing a product configuration, (col. 3, lines 24-40; col. 10, lines 44-

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53) the method comprising: receiving user input specifying at least one selected domain member (col. 3, lines 24-40; col. 16, lines 1-15; col. 10, lines 44-53); propagating the constraints over the received user input thereby producing a result the identifies incompatibilities between the domain member caused the at least one select domain member (col. 11, lines 3-27; col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47; col. 24, lines 59-col. 25, line 52; col. 26, lines 16-44); modifying the result by detecting and eliminating incompatibilities caused solely by bounceback behavior (col. 10, lines 64- col. 11, line 27; col. 12, lines 51-56; col. 18, line 26 – col. 19, line 9; col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47; col. 24, lines 59-col. 25, line 52; col. 25, line 64 – col. 26, line 44; col. 28, line 56 – col. 29, line 32). Furthermore, Geller disclose generating a configuration page based on the modified result so that domain members identified as being incompatible due to bounceback behavior are not marked as conflicted choices on the configuration page (col. 25, lines 1-45; Figures 14A-14B, 15A-15B); providing the configuration of the user (col. 25, lines 1-45; Figures 14A-14B, 15A-15B); repeating steps included in the method until the product configuration is complete (col. 10, lines 7-28); and the method is implemented by a set of software instructions running on a computer (col. 1, lines 6-9; col. 10, lines 13-17; col. 12, lines 51-56).

Regarding to claims 9-10 and 21, Geller discloses a method for detecting bounceback behavior associated with a configuration problem (col. 11, lines 3-27; col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47), the method comprising: receiving a domain member selection for a particular variable (col. 3, lines 24-40; col. 16, lines 1-15; col. 10, lines 44-53); setting a bounceback detection bit vector (Examiner has interpreted bit vector

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as parameter) (col. 10, line 64 - col. 11, line 2; col. 29, lines 34-col. 30, line 4) associated with each non-selected domain member of the particular variable so that each of those bounceback detection bit vectors indicates bounceback behavior (col. 13, lines 52-61; col. 18, lines 7-8); setting an elimination flag associated with each non-selected domain member of the particular variable (col. 11, lines 3-11; col. 13, lines 52-61; col. 18, lines 7-8); propagating the constraints to identify eliminated domain members of the variables; setting the bounceback detection bit vector of the eliminated domain members to indicate which variable caused their elimination; setting the elimination flag of each of the other eliminated domain members; initializing the bounceback detection bit vector for each domain member of each variable; and initializing the elimination flag for each domain member of each variable. (Col. 10, lines 64- col. 11, line 27; col. 12, lines 51-56; col. 18, line 26 – col. 19, line 9; col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47; col. 24, lines 59-col. 25, line 52; col. 25, line 64 – col. 26, line 44; col. 28, line 56 – col. 30, line 4; col. 30, line 5- col. 31, line 29).

Regarding claims 11-14, Geller discloses the receiving step includes receiving a plurality of domain member selection associated with a corresponding number of particular variables, and the setting and propagation steps of the method are performed for each domain member selections (col. 3, lines 24-40; col. 10, line 64 - col. 11, line 2; col. 16, lines 1-15; col. 10, lines 44-53); the bounceback detections bit vectors that indicate bounceback behavior indicate the particular variable associated with the selected domain member is responsible for elimination of the non-selected domain members; confirming the tentative elimination of a non-selected domain member in

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response to the bounceback detection bit vector associated with the non-selected domain member not indicating bounceback behavior as a result of subsequent constraint propagation; overriding the tentative elimination of a non-selected domain member in response to the bounceback detection bit vector associated with that non-selected domain member indicating bounceback behavior despite subsequent constraint propagation. (Col. 10, lines 64- col. 11, line 27; col. 12, lines 51-56; col. 18, line 26 – col. 19, line 9; col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47; col. 24, lines 59-col. 25, line 52; col. 25, line 64 – col. 26, line 44; col. 28, line 56 – col. 30, line 4p; col. 30, line 5- col. 31, line 29).

Regarding claims 15-17 and 22-24, Geller discloses the step of setting the bounceback detection bit vector of an eliminated domain member to indicate which variable caused that domain member's elimination includes: based on the constraints, identifying a domain member causing the eliminated domain member to be eliminated; copying the bounceback detection bit vector associated with the identified domain member to the bounceback detection bit vector associated with the eliminated domain member; wherein the step of setting the bounceback detection bit vector of an eliminated domain member to indicate which variable caused that domain member's elimination includes: based on constraints, identifying a join corresponding to a disjunction or conjunction; logically ANDing or ORing the bounceback detection bit vectors associated with the domain members included in the join thereby producing a resulting bounceback detection bit vector; and copying the resulting bounceback detection bit vector to the bounceback detection bit vector associated with the eliminated

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domain member. (Col. 23, line 46 – col. 24, line 47; col. 24, lines 59-col. 25, line 52; col. 25, line 64 – col. 26, line 44; col. 28, line 56 – col. 30, line 4; col. 30, line 5- col. 31, line 29)

Regarding claim 18-20, and 25, Geller generating a configuration page based on the modified result so that domain members identified as being eliminated due to bounceback behavior are not marked as conflicted choices on the configuration page (col. 25, lines 1-45; Figures 14A-14B, 15A-15B); providing the configuration of the user (col. 25, lines 1-45; Figures 14A-14B, 15A-15B); wherein steps of the method are repeated each time a user submits one or more domain member selections (col. 10, lines 7-28); and the method is implemented by a set of software instructions running on a computer (col. 1, lines 6-9; col. 10, lines 13-17; col. 12, lines 51-56).

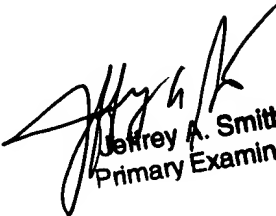
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Marissa Thein whose telephone number is 703-305-5246. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wynn Coggins can be reached on 703-308-1344. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9326 for regular communications and 703-872-9327 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

mtot
June 30, 2003



Jeffrey A. Smith
Primary Examiner